New Traffic Crash Reporting System goes 'live'

Local crash information available for law enforcement

Michigan law enforcement agencies can now pinpoint where crashes occur in their jurisdictions down to the intersection with just a few clicks of the mouse.

On December 8, 2003, a new web-based application was launched - the Traffic Crash Reporting System (TCRS). The program allows users to easily locate crash locations by county, city, township, Origination Agency Number (OR), or driver's license number. Detailed reports show crash histories for specific intersections as well as if pedestrians, commercial vehicles, or alcohol were involved. Access requires establishing a user ID through the Michigan State Police Criminal Justice Information Center (CJIC).

The \$3.8 million project, funded mostly through federal traffic safety dollars, will ultimately help save lives and money in Michigan.

"This is available at no charge to all law enforcement," said Mary Wichman, manager of the Traffic Crash Reporting Section at CJIC. "They can find the high crash areas in their county and take action as necessary. They'll know where they need to beef up enforcement and what time of day it needs to be done. This will ultimately help drive down crashes."

To create the new system, input was sought from law enforcement officers from state, county, and local agencies, the Traffic Improvement Association of Michigan, Michigan State Police Motor Carrier Division, Michigan Department of Transportation, Michigan Department of State and AAA Michigan.

The live application has 10 years of data available, currently 1993-2003. From 2001 and on, the actual UD-10 form filled out by the officer is also available. Wichman said the new system allows law enforcement to access local data in minutes as opposed to weeks.

Prior to the TCRS, crash data requests took from a few days to weeks because extracting the data from the mainframe system was so cumbersome, Wichman said. Now information can be found in just minutes.

Wichman said the new system has considerably sped up the data collection process. CJIC is currently inputting data for 2004 from incidents that occurred just 45 days ago.



Plans are underway to improve the process even further. In mid-May, CJIC will be able to accept electronic data from submitting agencies and scan the actual UD-10 form, instead of keying in the information, which will further improve both accuracy and timeliness of information.

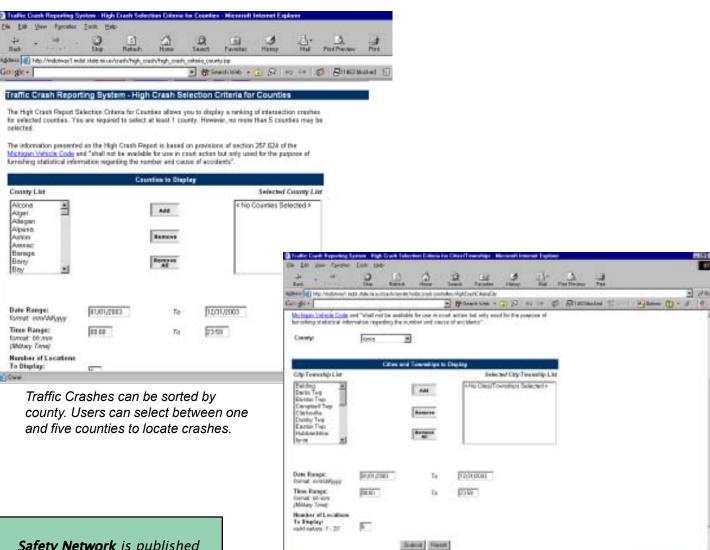
"With less keying you have less errors," Wichman said. "The only keying that will be done is information the scanner can't pick up because of handwriting or other issues. Previously, it took 28 people to process the data and this process was outsourced. This second phase will reduce the number needed to 15 people and we plan to bring it back in-house."

The TCRS currently has 1,379 users from 379 law enforcement agencies and Wichman said she has heard a great deal of positive feedback from users.

Continued on page 3

How to get a user ID

The state's new Traffic Crash Reporting System is only available to law enforcement officials. To access the program, users must obtain a log-in by submitting a form signed by the director of their department. To receive the form for a log-in, please contact Nathan Venno at the Michigan State Police Criminal Justice Information Center at (517) 322-5418 or via e-mail at vennon@michigan.gov.



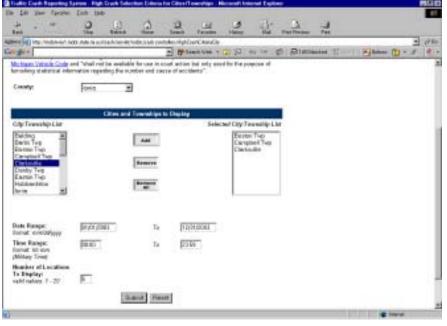
Safety Network is published quarterly by the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning

This special edition on the Traffic Crash Reporting System was published in April 2004.

Editor: Lynn Sutfin Michigan Department of State Police

Office of Highway Safety Planning

4000 Collins Road P.O. Box 30633 Lansing, MI 48909-8133 (517) 336-6477 Crash locations can be further narrowed down by selecting specific cities and townships.







Above: Once cities and townships are selected, a high-crash report can be generated by the Traffic Crash Reporting System, complete with ranking and number of crashes.



Above: A detailed report, with information about the type of crash, area, and whether alcohol, commercial vehicles, pedestrians, or bicycles played a role in the crash can also be obtained.

Right: Crash statistics for type or crash - fatal, injury, or property damage - can also be generated by time of day.

New Traffic Crash Reporting System goes 'live'

Continued from page 1

"Those I've heard from say they love it," she said. "It makes finding information so easy. I encourage all law enforcement to use this new tool to help make our roads safer."

One law enforcement official who has found the information particularly useful is Chief Arlan Winslow of the Imlay City Police Department. Winslow recently used the system to gather five years of crash data to send in with a grant application.

"Before, I would have had to contact the county road commission and MSP and then waited for the information while the deadline loomed," Winslow said. "Now it's at my fingertips."

Winslow said he also is planning some special traffic patrols after reviewing the information.

"This is an expanding area and sometimes you tend to overlook things or take things for granted," he said. "This new system has put some issues into perspective. We're looking at the data and traffic counts to see if some of our existing traffic ordinances need to be reviewed."





